



Illinois Civil Justice League

Candidate: Bruce Thiemann

10th Circuit, Vespa Vacancy

1. State the qualifications and experiences that make you qualified to serve on the bench in Illinois.

On October 26, 2009, I filed Petitions in Springfield to be on the February 2, 2010 primary election ballot for nomination to be a candidate for Judge of the Tenth Judicial Circuit to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Joe Vespa. I enter this race to continue the long standing and worthy tradition of the Tenth Judicial Circuit of having at least one Judge who along with sufficient legal experience also has a background that includes military service in time of armed conflict.

The counties of Peoria, Tazewell, Marshall, Stark and Putnam are represented by twenty judges who form the ranks of the elected and appointed Judges of the Tenth Judicial Circuit. I hope to be one of those judges. I hope to take the place of retiring Judge Joe Vespa, a Vietnam Era Veteran, so that following his retirement there will not be a gap in this circuit's longstanding tradition of including a Veteran on the bench.

I bring, to the race, a broad range of experience. I have practiced law in this community for many years. My practice has been both criminal and civil, with an emphasis on civil law, including trial work consisting of both jury trials and bench trials, and virtually all types of legal matters.

I have practiced both as a sole practitioner and with firms. Early in my career I was associated with the Quinn, Johnston firm. I am now a partner in the Kavanagh, Scully, Sudow, White & Frederick firm. In between I was a sole practitioner sharing space with various attorneys.

My experience also includes being a life-long member of the Peoria and East Peoria communities. My life has straddled the Illinois River. Until 1986 I lived in Peoria, mainly on the East Bluff. I attended Von Steuben Grade School and graduated from Woodruff High School.

While attending college at Illinois State, I saw the need, in 1968, for young men to serve their country. I followed the footsteps of my Father, Bob Thiemann, who served in WWII and my Great Uncles in the Thiemann and Moser families who served in WWI. I joined the Army in 1968 and volunteered to go to Vietnam where, in 1969, I served as a Door Gunner with the First Air Cavalry Regiment. We took part in helicopter assault missions designed to keep the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese from taking over the southern delta area of Vietnam.

I finished my tour of duty and returned to this community. After a period of adjustment during which I attended Illinois Central College, Bradley

University and Southern Illinois University, I graduated with a history degree in 1975. I then went east to law school and obtained a law degree from the American University in 1978.

I bring, to the race, my experience as a husband and a father. I am married to Teri McNulty Thiemann, who also attended Woodruff. We joined the East Peoria community in 1986 and our children, Bob and Maggie went through the East Peoria schools. We remain residents of East Peoria. Bob and Maggie both reside in Peoria.

My civic experience in East Peoria includes prior service on the Fondulac Park District Conservation Commission. In Peoria, I currently serve as Board Member of Springdale Cemetery.

From 2000-2007 I was actively involved as an original committee member and a strong supporter of the World War I and II Memorial Project, which culminated in the erection of the Peoria Courthouse Square Memorial to all those citizens of Peoria County who died in service during World War I and World War II.

I learned many years ago, in the air above South Vietnam, the importance of good leadership and teamwork. My country trusted me to wear the uniform and campaign for the cause of freedom overseas. I now ask the voters to trust me to wear a judge's robe to serve the cause of justice in the Peoria, Tazewell, Marshall, Stark and Putnam Counties.

2. One prominent Illinois judicial evaluation survey asks attorneys to evaluate candidates on Integrity, Impartiality, Legal Ability and Temperament. Critique yourself in these four areas as to how they make you qualified to serve on the bench.

My qualifications to serve on the bench are contained in the answer to Question No. 1. above.

3. Describe the case in which you are most proud of your work as a lawyer.

I try to be proud of each case I work on. I consider the practice of law to be a craft/art in which each case is the product the craftsman is proud to put his name on.

4. Name one change you would make in the Illinois court system.

Abolish the difference between elected and appointed judges, with all judges to be elected in non-partisan elections.

5. Are there civil litigation reforms that you would like to see enacted to remedy particular problems that you have detected, either as a practicing lawyer or as a sitting judge? Are there reforms that would benefit the civil justice system? What needs to be changed? Should the enactment of any such changes be the province of the legislature, the Supreme Court or by Constitutional amendment?

Simplification of statutory language and provisions. Often the laws are unreadable by non-lawyers. Ideally, the legal code should be consolidated

and simplified so that citizens can understand whether their conduct violates or doesn't violate a statute or law.

6. Do you believe that our judicial system adequately deters and penalizes frivolous litigation? If not, what reforms would you like to see?

I have seen very little frivolous litigation in the Tenth Judicial Circuit and, at least, in our five county area of Peoria, Tazewell, Marshall, Stark and Putnam Counties I believe the judicial system adequately deters and penalizes frivolous litigation.

7. Do you believe the Illinois Constitution precludes legislative establishment of limitations on civil damages? Are there or should there be distinctions among economic, non-economic and punitive damages?

I am unable to provide a response because this matter could potentially be raised in front of an elected judge and judicial ethics preclude a judge or a candidate from giving an opinion on a matter which might be brought before that judge.